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ANOTHER WORD TO LITERARY BEGINNERS.

WITHIN these few years past we have from time to time given a word of warning and of encouragement to Literary Aspirants. We do not use the latter word in any disparaging sense; but simply as the only one which fully embraces the great and constantly increasing class of persons, who, as writers of matter good, bad, and indifferent, are now weekly and daily knocking for admission at the doors of Literature. We have always been favourable to giving encouragement to young writers of ability, and never a year passes but we are able to introduce a few fresh contributors to the world of periodical literature. But this encouragement must necessarily be within certain lines, otherwise evil and not good would accrue to many. We are from time to time reminded by correspondents of what a popular novelist, possibly in a half-jocular mood, advised in this matter. His advice to parents amounted to this, that if they had an educated son or daughter with no particular calling in life, but in need of one, they had only to supply him or her with pens, ink, and paper, and a literary calling might at once be entered upon. We fear too many have laid, and daily lay, this flattering unction to their souls. In the majority of cases, disappointment and heart-sickness can alone be derived from the experiment.

In order to give those outside the circle of editorial cognisance some idea of the amount of literary matter sent in by outsiders, and which falls to be adjudicated upon on its merits, we subjoin an abstract of the number of manuscripts received by us during the twelve months from August 1882 to August 1883. During that period we have had offered to us in all 3225 manuscripts, of which 2065 were contributions in prose, and 1160 in verse. These offerings varied from each other to the utmost extent both as to size and subject, from a few stanzas of verse to the bulk of a three-volume novel, and came to us from all quarters of the English-speaking world, England, Scotland,

Ireland, the Continent, America, India, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and elsewhere. Of the 2065 prose manuscripts, 300 were accepted by us for publication, or fourteen per cent. of the whole. Of the 1160 pieces of verse, only 30 were accepted, or less than three per cent. of the total. Taking the two classes of contributions together, of the 3225 manuscripts received, 330 were accepted—that is, of every hundred manuscripts received, ten were retained by us and ninety returned to their authors. If we estimate this pile of contributions according to its bulk, and allowing a very moderate average length to each manuscript, the whole, if printed, would have filled 9125 pages of this *Journal*, or as much as would have sufficed for eleven of our yearly volumes.

The lesson to be derived from this by literary beginners is, not to be over-sanguine as to the acceptance of any article offered to magazines, knowing the great competition that is constantly going on for a place in their pages. It is true that those who possess the literary faculty in a sufficient degree will, though not perhaps without suffering many rejections and disappointments, ultimately assert their claims and obtain the coveted place; but even in such cases, the early struggle may sometimes be severe and long-continued. Nor must contributors go away under the impression that all rejected offerings are necessarily of an inferior quality. This is far from being the case. Great numbers of the prose articles in the above enumeration of rejected contributions, were articles with which no fault might be found in a literary sense. But it must be borne in mind that a magazine is limited in its space; and that when a definite part of that space has been allotted to articles or tales which have been supplied under previous arrangements made between author and editor, the remaining space may afford but small room for the number of claimants thereto. An article, therefore, which is perfectly equal to the literary standard of a magazine, may have to be returned by the editor on various grounds, such as that the subject of the paper does not come within the scope of his present requirements, or that an

article has already appeared or been accepted on the same subject, or that some one has been already engaged to write upon it; or, in short, a dozen reasons might be found, any one of which would be sufficient to cause the rejection of a given article. But what one magazine rejects another may be in need of; so that a really good article is almost certain of finding its billet somewhere.

In these circumstances, while there is nothing that need eventually discourage a capable or promising writer, there is much to make parents and guardians take warning before they set a young man or woman adrift on the sea of life with only his or her pen as a rudder. Literature, like painting, affords to persons of inferior or only mediocre powers a very precarious means of livelihood. Besides, places are not to be got in the literary any more than in the artistic world without evidence of genuine capacity being given by the claimant. The number of aspirants is no doubt from year to year being winnowed, until the grain shall be finally selected from the chaff; but the process, we admit, is not pleasant to those who do not come within the metaphorical category of grain. Scarcely a week passes but we receive letters requesting us, from the specimens of work inclosed, to say whether the contributor might hope to become a successful writer for magazines, as he or she is presently a clerk or a governess, and would wish to attain a better position, which position, 'kind friends'—often in this same matter, if they knew it, very unkind—think, might be reached through the channel of literature. It is not difficult, as a rule, to advise in such cases. It is, stick to your present occupation, if it is only respectable, and on no account throw it up in the hope of having your name engrossed in the higher rolls of literary achievement. Even in the case of what may be called successful minor contributors to periodical literature, it can hardly be possible, we should think, for them to rely *wholly* upon the results for a livelihood. Nor is it necessary to do so. The kind of literary work to which we allude can, in general, be carried on side by side with the work of an ordinary occupation or profession, as it is rarely that the articles of a writer of this class are in such constant demand as to make it necessary to give his or her whole time to their production. When this combination can be maintained, a useful source of income is added, without in all cases necessarily detracting from one's professional industry otherwise.

What we have said is not with the object of repressing literary ambition, but of preventing literary aspirants from setting out under false ideas, or quitting the successful pursuit of their ordinary occupations in the too frequently unrealised hope of rising to literary distinction. It must not be forgot that the desire to write does not necessarily comprehend the power to write well; or that, even with those who succeed in demonstrating their literary capabilities, such success is obtained without hard work and long practice. As we have said on former occasions, writers must not start, as is too often done, on the assumption that their possession of *genius* is to be taken for granted; genius only comes once in a while—once or twice in a generation perhaps. It is always safer to begin upon

the supposition that your faculties are of the kind which, like granite, will only shine by polishing; and if genius should be evoked in the process, the polishing will not harm it. We would not wish to dim the roseate hues which the future has for those who are young; but neither would we wish to be responsible for encouraging within them hopes that are not likely to be realised, or only realised under special powers of application, or by the operation of special natural faculties.

BY MEAD AND STREAM.

CHAPTER VI.—ALONE.

It was a strange life that of Mr Lloyd Hadleigh. A solitary life, notwithstanding the consciousness of success, the possession of a considerable fortune, and the knowledge that it had been earned by his own ability. He was still young enough to have the capacity for enjoyment, if age were numbered by years; still young enough to have been the companion of his children and to have made new friendships. But there was something so cold and reserved in his bearing, that although he had many acquaintances, he had no friends or companions; and the good fortune he possessed made many people resent his ungracious manner.

With everything apparently that man could desire to secure happiness, he lived absolutely alone. His nearest approach to companionship was with his eldest son Coutts Hadleigh. But even with him there was constraint, and their companionship appeared to be due more to their close association in business than to affection.

This Coutts Hadleigh was a tall, wiry man, who entered into the pleasures of the world with discretion, and a cynical smile always on his face, as if he were laughing at the pleasures rather than in them. He was a captain of Volunteers, and as punctual in his attendance upon drill as in attendance at his office. For he was a strict man of business, and was now the practical manager as well as leading partner in the house of Hadleigh and Co., shipbrokers and bankers. He neither laughed at his brother Philip's indifference to the affairs of the office, nor attempted to advise him. Sometimes, however, he would say, with one of his dry, cynical smiles: 'You are doing everything you can, Phil, to keep yourself out of a partnership, and you will be sorry for it some day—especially if you mean to marry that young lady over the way in a hurry. Playing the gentleman at ease is not the way to make sure of the ease. However'—Then he would shrug his shoulders, as if washing his hands of the whole matter with the mental exclamation: 'But just as you like; there will be the more for me.' Only he never uttered that exclamation aloud.

'All right,' Philip would say with a laugh; 'my time is coming; and I prefer happiness to a banking account.'

There the subject would drop, and Coutts would turn away with a pitying smile.

As for the three daughters, they accepted their position with as much content as is permitted to young ladies who have nothing whatever to do but go through the routine of paying formal

visits in their carriage, attending garden parties in summer and dining out in winter. Miss Hadleigh (Beatrice) had been lately engaged to a thriving young merchant, and in consequence assumed a dignified primness. The other two, Caroline and Bertha, were looking forward to that happy state; and, meanwhile, having just been released from boarding-school, found their chief delights in fiction and lawn-tennis. They had every opportunity to enjoy themselves in their own ways, for their father interfered little with them, whilst he never stinted them in pocket-money.

Ringsford Manor was a large old-fashioned building of red brick, with a wing added by Mr Hadleigh, when he came into possession, for a new dining-room and a billiard-room. The house stood in about twenty acres of ground, on the borders of the Forest. The gardens were under the care of a Scotchman, named Sam Culver, whose pride it was to produce the finest pansies, roses, and geraniums in the neighbourhood or at the local flower-shows. He had also obtained a prize at the Crystal Palace rose-show, which made him more eager than ever to maintain his reputation. The result of this honourable ambition was that the grounds of Ringsford were the admiration of the whole county; and as the proprietor on certain days of the year threw them open to the public and invited bands of school-children to an annual fête, his character as a benefactor spread far and wide.

Much, however, as Sam Culver's skill as a gardener was admired, there were many gallants, old as well as young, who declared that the finest flower he had ever reared was his daughter, Pansy.

As Mr Hadleigh was returning from his visit to Willowmere, he got out of the carriage about half a mile from his own gate and bade the coachman drive home. Then he proceeded to walk slowly into the Forest in the direction of the King's Oak.

The rich foliage, the dense clumps of bracken and furze, with their changing colours and varying lights and shades looking their best in the bright sunshine, did not attract his eyes. His head was bowed and his hands tightly clasped behind him, as if his thoughts were bitter ones and far away from the lovely scene around him. At times he would lift his head with a sudden jerk and look into space, seeing nothing.

But as he approached the broad spreading King's Oak—so called from some legendary association with King Charles—the loud laughter of children roused him from his reverie.

Pansy Culver was seated on the ground, threading necklets and bracelets of buttercups and daisies for a group of little children who were capering and laughing round her. She was herself a child still in thought, but verging on womanhood in years; and the soft, bright features, brown with the sun, and lit by two dark, merry eyes, suggested that her father in his fancy for his favourite flowers had given her an appropriate name.

She rose respectfully as Mr Hadleigh approached; and he halted, looking for an instant as if he ought to know her and did not. Then his eyes took in the whole scene—the bright face, the happy children, and the buttercups and daisies.

Something in the appearance of the group brought a curiously sad expression to his face. He was contrasting their condition with his own: the little that made them so joyful, and the much that gave him no content.

'Ah, Pansy,' he said, 'what a fortunate girl you are. I wish I could change places with you—and yet no; that is an evil wish. Do you not think so?'

'I don't know, sir; and I don't know how you should wish to change places with me. I do not think many people like you would want to do it.'

A slow nodding movement of his head expressed his pity for her ignorance of how little is required for real happiness, and how the contented ploughman is richer than he who possesses the mines of Golconda without content. It was that sort of movement which accompanies the low sibilating sound of *tst-tst-tst*.

'I hope you will never know, child, why a person like me can wish to change places with one like you.'

He passed on slowly, leaving the girl looking after him in wonderment. When she told her father of this singular encounter, he only said: 'I'm doubtin' the poor man has something on his mind. But it's none of our business; and you ken there is only one kind o' riches that brings happiness.'

Mr Hadleigh spent the rest of that day in his library. He was writing, but not letters. At intervals he would rise and pace the floor, as if agitated by what he wrote. Then he seemed to force himself to sit down again at the desk and continue writing, and would presently repeat the former movement.

By the time that Philip returned, several sheets of closely written manuscript had been carefully locked away in a deed-box, and the box was locked away in a safe which stood in the darkest corner of the room.

After dinner he desired Philip to come into the library as soon as he had finished his cigar. Although he did not smoke himself, he did not object to the habit in others.

'Something queer about the governor to-night,' said Coutts, sipping his wine and smoking leisurely. 'I have noticed him several times lately looking as if he had got a fit of the blues or dyspepsia at least, yet I don't know how that can be with a man who is so careful of his digestion. He ought to come into town oftener.'

'Anything wrong in town?' inquired Philip, and in his tone there was a note of consideration for his father: in that of Coutts there was none.

'Things never were better since I have known the business. That is not the cause of his queer humour, whatever it may be. Might be first touch of gout.'

Philip rose and threw away his cigar. He did not like his brother's manner when he spoke in this manner of their parent.

On entering the library, he found it almost in darkness; for the curtains were partly drawn and the lamps were not lit. For a moment he could not see his father; but presently discovered him standing on the hearth, his arms crossed on the broad mantel-shelf, and his brow resting on them. He turned slowly, and his face was in

deep shadow, so that its expression could not be distinguished.

'I told them I did not want lights yet,' he said, and there was a huskiness in his voice which was very unusual, as it was rather metallic in its clearness. 'Will you excuse it, and sit down?'

'Certainly, sir; but I hope there is nothing seriously wrong. I trust you are not unwell?'

There was no answer for a moment, and the dark outline of the figure was like a mysterious silhouette. Then: 'I am not particularly well at present. The matter which I wish to speak to you about is serious; but I believe there is nothing wrong in it, and that we can easily come to an agreement about it. Will you sit down?'

Philip obeyed, marvelling greatly as to what this mysterious business could be which seemed to disturb his father so much, making him speak and act so unlike himself.

(To be continued.)

THE FIRE OF FRENDRAUGHT.

ABOUT six miles from the thriving market-town of Huntly, in Aberdeenshire, stands the mansion-house of Frendraught, built on the site and incorporating the ruins of the old castle of that name. In the seventeenth century it was the scene of a strange and inexplicable event—an event which, on the supposition that it was not accidental, might well be regarded as tragic.

The lands of Frendraught, towards the beginning of the seventeenth century, were in the possession of James Crichton, a laird or minor baron of the period, sufficiently proud of that designation to slight and reject the title of viscount which his son accepted in his father's lifetime. His wife was Lady Elizabeth Gordon, a woman of a proud and resolute character, daughter of the Earl of Sutherland, and a 'near cousin,' as Spalding expresses it, of the Marquis of Huntly, a connection which should be remembered in the course of the narrative. On the crest of a knoll that overlooks the river Deveron, stood and still stands the Tower of Kinnairdy, another baronial residence of Crichton, at the distance of a few miles from Frendraught. Four miles above Kinnairdy, on the same river, stood Rothiemay, the home of the Gordons of Rothiemay, a sept of that numerous and powerful clan of which the Marquis of Huntly was chief. The lairds of Frendraught and of Rothiemay were thus neighbours, at a period when neighbourhood as surely engendered strife as friction develops heat. It chanced that Gordon of Rothiemay sold a portion of his lands adjoining the Deveron to the laird of Frendraught.

At the present day, there is perhaps no river in Scotland which at certain seasons of the year furnishes better sport to the angler for salmon than the Deveron, and its excellence in this respect must equally have characterised it two centuries ago; for the right to the valuable salmon-fishing appertaining to the land which had been sold became the subject of bitter strife between the two lairds. Frendraught appealed to the law; but while the cause was winding its way slowly through the courts, he managed, by persecution and provocation, to hurry Rothiemay into acts of exasperation and illegality, which made it easy to procure a decree of outlawry against him.

After this, as a contemporary historian has it, 'Rothiemay would hearken to no conditions of peace, neither would he follow the advice of his wisest friends.' He made a raid upon the lands of Crichton, who thereupon obtained from the Privy-council a commission to apprehend him.

On the 1st of January 1630, the laird of Frendraught, accompanied by Sir George Ogilvie of Banff, and, among others of less note, by young Leslie of Pitcaple and John Meldrum of Reidhill, set out to seize Rothiemay in his own domain. Rothiemay, having learned their intention, mustered what forces he could, and marched to meet them. A desperate encounter took place. Rothiemay's horse was killed under him. He continued to fight on foot till his followers were driven from the field, leaving his son and himself still maintaining a struggle against outnumbering foes. At length he fell, whereupon young Rothiemay sought safety in flight. His father, covered with wounds, was left for dead on the ground; but having been carried home by his friends, survived for three days. On Frendraught's side, one gentleman was slain, and John Meldrum—of whom more will be heard—was wounded.

The feud between the two houses, rancorous enough before, was prosecuted with the deadliest animosity now that blood had been shed on both sides. Deeds of savage reprisal ensued; and as each party sought to strengthen itself by enlisting new adherents, the area of strife grew wider, and assumed proportions so menacing to the public peace, that the Privy-council made earnest but fruitless endeavours to effect a reconciliation between the hostile houses.

Young Gordon of Rothiemay feeling himself the weaker in the struggle, called to his aid the notorious Highland cateran, James Grant, and his band. It is singular that we have neither ballad nor legend commemorating the career of this person—a career which, in its extraordinary feats of daring insolence, its marvellous escapes, and dark deeds of blood, outrivals all that is recorded of Rob Roy. At this juncture, while Grant and his followers were mustering at Rothiemay House for a raid against Frendraught, and when the Earl of Moray, Lieutenant of the North, had confessed himself utterly unable to suppress the commotion, a commission, sent by the Privy-council, associating itself with the Marquis of Huntly, succeeded in effecting an arrangement between the hostile parties. Grant was dismissed to his mountain fortresses; Crichton and Rothiemay were persuaded to meet at Strathbogie, the residence of the Marquis, where, after much earnest intercession, the commissioners succeeded in settling terms of peace and reconciliation. The deeds of blood were mutually forgiven, and, as a concession to the greatest sufferer, Crichton agreed to pay fifty thousand merks to the widow of the slain laird of Rothiemay. Over this arrangement all parties shook hands in the orchard of Strathbogie.

Little did they suspect, while congratulating themselves on the termination of the quarrel, that one spark had been left smouldering, which was soon to blaze into a more destructive conflagration than that which had just been extinguished. Among those who had fought on Crichton's side against the laird of Rothiemay we have mentioned one John Meldrum as having

been wounded. This Meldrum was one of those ruffianly retainers, half-gentleman half-groom, who hung on the skirts of the more powerful barons, ready for any task assigned them without a question or a scruple. At this time he was an outlaw. Conceiving that Frendraught had too lightly estimated his service and his sufferings, he persecuted the laird with appeals for ampler remuneration, and finding them disregarded, took satisfaction in his own way by stealing two of the laird's best horses from a meadow adjoining the castle.

Crichton at first appealed to the law; but Meldrum failed to appear in answer to the charge, and was outlawed. Crichton therefore received a commission to arrest him; and learning that he had taken refuge with the Leslies of Pitcaple, relatives by marriage, set out with a small party in quest of him; but the encounter only resulted in one of Crichton's friends wounding a son of Pitcaple.

Afraid of the consequences of this new feud, and remembering the good offices of the Marquis of Huntly on a former occasion, Crichton solicited his intercession with the laird of Pitcaple. The Marquis invited both lairds to the Bog of Gicht, now Gordon Castle; but old Leslie remained obdurate, declaring that he would entertain no terms of reconciliation until he saw the issue of his son's wound; and departed with unabated resentment. The Marquis detained Crichton two days longer, having also as his guest young Gordon of Rothiemay; and on Crichton's departure, fearing that he might be attacked by the Leslies, he sent as an escort his second son, Viscount Melgum (who was also frequently called Aboyne), and young Rothiemay, with their attendants. The party reached Frendraught Castle in the evening (October 8, 1630); and the Viscount, with his friend Rothiemay, was induced by the entreaties of Crichton and his lady, to remain for the night.

Thus far the course of events is clear and intelligible; what followed is involved in doubt and obscurity. Spalding, in his *Memorials*, says: 'They [the guests] were well entertained, supped merrily, and to bed went joyfully. The Viscount was laid in a bed in the old tower (going off of the hall), and standing upon a vault, wherein there was a round hole, devised of old just under Aboyne's bed. Robert Gordon, born in Sutherland, his servitor, and English Will, his page, were both laid beside him in the same chamber. The laird of Rothiemay, with some servants beside him, was laid in an upper chamber just above Aboyne's chamber; and in another room above that chamber were laid George Chalmer of Noth, and George Gordon, another of the Viscount's servants, with whom also was laid Captain Rollok, then in Frendraught's own company. Thus all being at rest, about midnight that dolorous tower took fire in so sudden and furious a manner, yea, and in a clap, that this noble Viscount, the laird of Rothiemay, English Will, Colin Eviot, another of Aboyne's servitors, and other two, being six in number, were cruelly burnt and tormented to the death but [without] help or relief; the laird of Frendraught, his lady [both of whom had slept in a separate wing of the building], and his whole household looking on without moving or stirring to deliver them from the

fury of this fearful fire, as was reported. Robert Gordon, called Sutherland Gordon, being in the Viscount's chamber, escaped this fire with his life. George Chalmer and Captain Rollok, being in the third room, escaped also this fire; and, as was said, Aboyne might have saved himself also, if he had gone out of doors, which he would not do, but suddenly ran up-stairs to Rothiemay's chamber and wakened him to rise; and as he is wakening him, the timber passage and lofting of the chamber hastily takes fire, so that none of them could win down stairs again; so they turned to a window looking to the close, where they piteously cried Help, help, many times, for God's cause. The laird and the lady, with their servants, all seeing and hearing this woful crying, but made no help nor manner of helping; which they perceiving, they cried oftentimes mercy at God's hand for their sins, then clasped in other's arms, and cheerfully suffered this cruel martyrdom. . . . It is reported that upon the morn after this woful fire, the lady Frendraught, daughter to the Earl of Sutherland, and near cousin to the Marquis, busked in a white plaid, and riding on a small nag, having a boy leading her horse, without any more in her company, in this pitiful manner came weeping and mourning to the Bog [Gordon Castle], desiring entry to speak with my lord; but this was refused; so she returned back to her own house the same gate [way] she came, comfortless.'

It is clear from this extract that Spalding's opinion was that which the Marquis of Huntly adopted after consultation with his friends, namely, that the fire was not accidental, but the result of a plot, in which Frendraught and his lady were accomplices. This belief takes forcible expression in the ballad which was composed on the occasion, and is still popular in the neighbourhood of Frendraught. It is sufficient to cite a few verses:

When steeds were saddled and well bridled,
And ready for to ride,
Then out came her and false Frendraught
Inviting them to bide.

When they were dressed in their cloaths,
And ready for to boun,
The doors and windows was all secured,
The roof-tree burning down.

'O mercy, mercy, Lady Frendraught!
Will ye not sink with sin?
For first your husband killed my father,
And now you burn his son.'

Oh, then outspoke her Lady Frendraught,
And loudly did she cry—
'It were great pity for good Lord John,
But none for Rothiemay;
But the keys are casten in the deep draw-well;
Ye cannot get away.'

That the laird of Frendraught and his lady either contrived the deed or acquiesced in it, is difficult of belief. The presumptions generally are against such a conclusion. There is no reason for supposing that the laird of Frendraught was not honest in reconciling himself to Rothiemay; but even allowing him to be wicked enough to plan the destruction by fire of the son of the man whom he had slain, while a guest under his roof, how is it possible to believe that he chose a plan which must involve the

death of Viscount Melgum, a son of the Marquis of Huntly, and hitherto his friend?

Crichton was perfectly aware of the popular suspicion; and the fruitless visit of his wife to Gordon Castle sufficiently disclosed the sentiments of the Marquis. Shortly after the fire, therefore, he placed himself under the protection of the Lord Chancellor, offering to undergo any trial, and to assist in every way in discovering the perpetrators of the crime.

The Privy-council made the most strenuous efforts to pierce the mystery. Before the end of the year, John Meldrum and three of his servants, and about thirty of the servants or dependents of Crichton, had been apprehended, and about as many more summoned to Edinburgh to give evidence; but not the slightest clue was obtained as to the origin of the fire.

In the following April, a commission, consisting of the Earl Marischal, the bishops of Aberdeen and Moray, with three others, was sent to investigate the occurrence on the spot. They cautiously reported thus: 'We find by all likelihood that the fire whereby the house was burned was first raised in a vault, wherein we find evidences of fire in three sundry parts; one at the furthest end thereof, another towards the middle, and the third on that gable which is hard by the hole that is under the bed which was in the chamber above. Your good lordships will excuse us if we determine not concerning the fire whether it was accidental or of set purpose by the hand of man; only this much it seemeth probable unto us, after consideration of the frame of the house and other circumstances, that no hand from without could have raised the fire without aid from within.'

For a year the Council did nothing, being utterly at a loss as to what they should do; but public indignation, and the desire to bring home the guilt to the criminals—if guilt there were—had not abated, and, stimulated by a message on the subject from the king, the Council actually resolved to devote one day every week to further investigation. At the same time, John Meldrum was ordered to be tried by torture.

In August 1632, John Tosh, master of the household at Frendraught, was brought to the bar of the Court of Justiciary on the charge of setting fire to the vault from within. It was pleaded for him that, having endured the torture of the 'boots,' and thereafter of the 'pilniewinks' or thumbkins, and having on oath declared his innocence, he could not be put to further trial; and this plea was sustained.

In August 1633—nearly three years after the fire—John Meldrum of Reidhill was put upon his trial, charged with having set fire to the vault from the outside. It was urged against him, that he had associated himself with James Grant, the notorious robber, in order to wreak his vengeance on Frendraught; that he had threatened to do Frendraught an evil turn some day; and being asked how, had said that the laird would be burned; and that he had been seen riding towards Frendraught Castle on the evening before the fire. It was suggested that he had set fire to the vault by throwing combustibles, such as powder, brimstone, and pitch, through the narrow slits that served as windows. On such evidence as was offered against him,

no jury at the present day would convict. The assumption that fire had been introduced from the outside was directly against the conclusion of the Council's commission; and Meldrum's counsel insisted on the impossibility of kindling a fire in a vault to which the only access from the outside was by narrow slits piercing a wall ten feet thick. Nevertheless, Meldrum was convicted, and hanged.

The jury seem to have thought some victim should be offered for the public satisfaction, and that no injustice would be done to John Meldrum in assigning him as a sacrifice, seeing that he had done quite enough to deserve hanging, even if he had no hand in the burning of Frendraught Castle. With the execution of Meldrum, all further proceedings in the case ceased; but suspicion and animosity rankled long in the House of Huntly against Frendraught. The origin of the fire still remains a mystery.

TWO DAYS IN A LIFETIME.

A STORY IN EIGHT CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER IV.

CAPTAIN BOWOOD had spoken truly. Lady Dimsdale and Mr Boyd were sauntering slowly in the direction of the house, deep in conversation, and quite unaware that they were being watched from a little distance by the woman in black whom Mrs Bowood had taken to be an applicant for the post of French governess.

Oscar Boyd was a tall, well-built man, verging towards his fortieth year. His complexion was deeply imbrowned by years of tropical sunshine. He had a silky chestnut beard and moustache, and hair of the same colour, which, however, was no longer so plentiful as it once had been. He had clear, frank-looking eyes, a firm-set mouth, and a face which gave you the impression of a man who was at once both thoughtful and shrewd. It was one of those kindly yet resolute faces which seem to invite confidence, but would never betray it.

Lady Dimsdale brought quite a heap of flowers into the room. There was a large shallow vase on the centre table, which it was her intention to fill with her floral spoils. 'You look as cool as if this were December instead of June,' she said.

'I have been used to much hotter suns than that of England.'

'I hardly knew you again at first—not till I heard you speak.'

'Fifteen years are a long time.'

'Yet already it seems to me as if I should have known you anywhere. You are different, and yet the same.'

'When I arrived last evening, I did not know that you were here. I heard your voice before I saw you, and the fifteen years seemed to vanish like a dream.'

'It seems to me like a dream when I go back in memory to those old days at the vicarage, and call to mind all that happened there.'

'Do you ever think of that evening when you and I parted?'

'I have not forgotten it,' answered Lady Dimsdale in a low voice.

'How little we thought that we should not meet again for so long a time!'

'How little we foresaw all that would happen to us in the interval!'

'If that telegram had arrived ten minutes later, how different our lots in life might have been!'

'Life seems made up of *Ifs* and *Buts*,' she answered with a little sigh.

'That evening! The scent of new-mown hay was in the air.'

'The clock in the old church tower had just struck seven.'

'Under the hill, a nightingale was singing.'

'Far off, we heard the murmur of the tide.'

'Fido basking among fallen rose-leaves on the terrace.'

'Wagging his tail lazily, as if beating time to some tune that was running in his head.'

'We stood by the wicket, watching the last load of hay winding slowly through the lanes. I seized the moment'—

'You seized something else.'

'Your hand. If you had only known how nervous I was! I pressed your fingers to my lips. "Laura, I love you," I stammered out.'

'"Darling Laura," was what he said,' murmured Lady Dimsdale to herself.

'Before I had time for another word, Hannah came hurrying down the steps.'

'Dear old Hannah, with her mob-cap and prim white apron. I seem to see her now.'

'She had an open paper in her hand. Your aunt had been taken ill, and you were instructed to go to her by the first train. You gave me one look—a look that haunted me for years—and went into the house without a word. An hour later, I saw you at the train; but your father was there, and he kept you by his side till the last moment.'

'That miserable journey! For the first twenty miles I was alone; then an old lady got in. "Dear me, how damp this carriage feels," she said. I rather fancy I had been crying.'

'And we never met after that, till last evening.'

'Never!' murmured Lady Dimsdale almost inaudibly.

'Two days after our parting, I was ordered abroad; but I wrote to you, not once or twice only, but many times.'

'Not one line from you did I ever receive.'

'Then my letters must have been intercepted. I addressed them to your aunt's house in Scotland, where you were staying at the time.'

'Aunt Judith had set her heart on my marrying Sir Thomas Dimsdale.'

'And would not let my letters reach you. Week after week and month after month, I waited for an answer, hoping against hope; but none ever came.'

'Week after week and month after month, I waited for a letter from you; but none ever came.'

'And your Aunt Judith—she who intercepted my letters—was accounted a good woman.'

'An excellent woman. Even on wet Sundays, she always went to church twice.'

'So excellent, that at length she persuaded you to marry Sir Thomas.'

'It was not her persuasion that induced me to marry. It was to save my father from ruin.'

'What a sacrifice!'

'You must not say that. How could anything I might do for my father's sake be accounted a sacrifice?'

Oscar Boyd did not answer. Lady Dimsdale's white slender fingers were busy with the arrangement of her flowers, and he seemed absorbed in watching them.

'And you too married?' she said at length in a low voice.

'I did—but not till more than a year after I read the notice of your marriage in the newspapers. Life seemed no longer worth living. I cared not what became of me. I fell into the toils of an adventuress, who after a time inveigled me into marrying her.'

'Your marriage was an unhappy one?'

'Most unhappy. After a few months, we separated, and I never saw my wife again. Her fate was a sad one. A year or two later, a steamer she was on board of was lost at sea; and so far as is known, not a soul survived to tell the tale.'

'A sad fate indeed.'

The subject was a painful one to Oscar Boyd. He crossed to the window, and stood gazing out for a few moments in silence.

Lady Dimsdale's thoughts were busy. 'What is there to hinder him from saying again to-day the words he said to me fifteen years ago?' she asked herself. 'If he only knew!'

'How strange it seems, Laura, to be alone with you again after all these years!' He spoke from the window.

A beautiful flush spread swiftly over Lady Dimsdale's face. Her heart beat quickly. In a moment she had grown fifteen years younger. 'He calls me Laura!' she murmured softly to herself. 'Surely he will say the words now.'

'I could fancy this was the dear never-to-be-forgotten room in the old vicarage—that that was the garden outside. In another moment, Fido will come bounding in. Hannah will open the door and tell us tea is waiting. We shall hear your father whistling softly to himself, while he counts the ripening peaches on the wall.'

'Oscar, don't!' cried Lady Dimsdale in a voice that was broken with emotion.

Oscar Boyd came slowly back from the window, and stood for a few moments watching her in silence. Then he laid a hand gently on one of hers, took possession of it, looked at it for a moment, and then pressed it to his lips. Then with a lingering pressure, he let it drop, and walked away again to the window.

Lady Dimsdale's eyes followed him; she could have laughed or she could have cried; she was on the verge of both. 'Oh, my dear one, if you only knew what stupid creatures you men are!' she said to herself. 'Why isn't this leap-year?'

Presently Mr Boyd paced back again to the table; he seemed possessed by some demon of restlessness. 'With your permission, I will relate a little apologue to you,' he said; and then he drew up a chair near to the table and sat

down. 'I once had a friend who was a poor man, and was in love with a woman who was very rich. He had made up his mind to ask her to be his wife, when one day he chanced to hear himself stigmatised as a fortune-hunter, as an adventurer who sought to marry a rich wife in order that he might live on her money. Then, although he loved this woman very dearly, he went away without saying a word of that which was in his heart.'

'Must not your friend have been a weak-minded man, to let the idle talk of an empty busybody come between himself and happiness? He deserved to lose his prize. But I too have a little apologue to tell to you. Once on a time there was a woman whom circumstances compelled against her wishes to marry a rich old man. When he died, he left her all his wealth, but on one condition—that she should never marry again. Any one taking her for his wife must take her—for herself alone.'

Oscar rose and pushed back his chair. His face flushed; a great flame of love leaped suddenly into his eyes. Lady Dimsdale was bending over her flowers. Neither of them saw the black-robed figure that was standing motionless by the open window.

'Laura!' said Oscar in a voice that was scarcely raised above a whisper.

She turned her head and looked at him. Their eyes met. For a moment each seemed to be gazing into the other's heart. Then Oscar went a step nearer and held out both his hands. An instant later he had his arms round her and his lips were pressed to hers. 'My own at last, after all these weary years!' he murmured.

The figure in black had come a step or two nearer. She flung back her veil with a sudden passionate gesture.

'Oscar Boyd!' The words were spoken with a sort of slow, deliberate emphasis.

The lovers fell apart as though a thunderbolt had dropped between them. Oscar's face changed on the instant to a ghastly pallor. With one hand, he clutched the back of a chair; the other went up to his throat, as though there were something there which stopped his breathing. For the space of a few seconds the ticking of the clock on the chimney-piece was the only sound that broke the silence.

Then came the question: 'Who are you?' breathed rather than spoken.

In clear incisive tones came the answer: 'Your wife!'

The day was three hours older.

The news that Mr Boyd's wife, who was supposed to have been drowned several years before, had unexpectedly proved that she was still in existence, was not long before it reached the ears of everybody at Rosemount, from Captain Bowood himself to the boy in the stables. As soon as he had recovered in some degree from the first shock of surprise, Oscar had gone in search of Mrs Bowood; and having explained to her in as few words as possible what had happened, had asked her to grant him the use of one of her parlours for a few hours. Mrs Bowood, who was the soul of hospitality, would fain have gone on the instant and welcomed Mrs Boyd, as she welcomed all her guests at Rosemount, and it

may be with even more *empressment* than usual, considering the remarkable circumstances of the case. Mr Boyd, however, vetoed her proposition in a way which caused her to suspect that there must be something more under the surface than she was aware of; so, with ready tact, she forbore to question him further, and at once placed a sitting-room at his disposal.

In this room the husband and his newly found wife were shut up together. Mr Boyd looked five years older than he had looked a few hours previously. He was very pale. A certain hardness in the lines of his mouth, unnoticed before, now made itself plainly observable. His brows were contracted; all the gladness, all the softness had died out of his dark eyes as completely as if they had never had an existence there. He was sitting at a table, poring over some railway maps and time-tables. On a sofa, separated from him by half the length of the room, sat his wife. She was a tall, dark, shapely woman, who had left her thirtieth birthday behind her some years ago. She had a profusion of black hair, and very bright black eyes, with a certain cold, clear directness of gaze in them, which for some men seemed to have a sort of special charm. Certainly, they looked like eyes that could never melt with sympathy or be softened by tears. She had a long Grecian nose, and full red lips; but her chin was too heavy and rounded for the rest of her face. Her clear youthful complexion owed probably as much to art as it did to nature; but it was art so skillfully applied as sometimes to excite the envy of those of her own sex to whom such secrets were secrets no longer. In any case, most men conceded that she was still a very handsome woman, and it was not likely that she was unaware of the fact.

She sat for a little while tapping impatiently with one foot on the carpet, and glancing furtively at the impassive face bent over its books and maps, which seemed for the time to have forgotten that there was any such person as she in existence. At length she could keep silent no longer. 'You do not seem particularly delighted by the return of your long-lost wife, who was saved from shipwreck by a miracle. Many men would be beside themselves with joy; but you are a philosopher, and know how to hide your feelings. *Eh bien!* if you are not overjoyed to see me, I am overjoyed to see you; and I love you so very dearly, that I will never leave you again.' Only a slight foreign accent betrayed the fact that she was not an Englishwoman.

Oscar Boyd took no more notice of her than if she had been addressing herself to the empty air.

She rose and crossed the room to the fireplace, and glanced at herself in the glass. There was a dangerous light in her eyes. 'If he does not speak to me, I shall strike him!' she said to herself. Then aloud: 'I have travelled six thousand miles in search of you, and now that I have found you, you have not even one kiss to greet me with! What a heart of marble yours must be!'

Still the impassive figure at the table made no more sign than if it had been carved in stone.

There was a pretty Venetian glass ornament on the chimney-piece. Mrs Boyd took it up and dashed it savagely on the hearth, where it was

shattered to a hundred fragments. Then with white face and passion-charged eyes, she turned and faced her husband. 'Oscar Boyd, why don't you speak to your wife!'

'Because I have nothing to say to her.' He spoke as coldly and quietly as he might have spoken to the veriest stranger.

She controlled her passion with an effort. 'Nothing to say to me! You can at least tell me something of your plans. Are we going to remain here, or are we going away, or what are we going to do?'

He began deliberately to fold the map he had been studying. 'We shall start for London by the five o'clock train,' he said. 'At the terminus, we shall separate, to meet again to-morrow at my lawyer's office. It will not take long to draw up a deed of settlement, by which a certain portion of my income will for the future be paid over to you. After that, we shall say farewell, and I shall never see you again.'

She stared at him with bewildered eyes. 'Never see me again!' she gasped out. 'Me—your wife!'

'Estelle—you know the reasons which induced me to vow that I would never regard you as my wife again. Those reasons have the same force now that they had a dozen years ago. We meet, only to part again a few hours hence.'

She had regained some portion of her *sang-froid* by this time. A shrill mocking laugh burst from her lips. It was not a pleasant laugh to hear. 'During my husband's absence, I must try to console myself with my husband's money. You are a rich man, *caro mio*; you have made a large fortune abroad; and I shall demand to be treated as a rich man's wife.'

'You are mistaken,' he answered, without the least trace of emotion in his manner or voice. 'I am a very poor man. Nearly the whole of my fortune was lost by a bank failure a little while ago.'

His words seemed to strike her dumb.

'In three days I start for Chili,' continued Oscar. 'My old appointment has not been filled up; I shall apply to be reinstated.'

'And I have come six thousand miles for this!' muttered Estelle under her breath. She needed a minute or two to recover her equanimity—to decide what her next move should be.

Her husband was jotting down a few notes with a pencil. She turned and faced him suddenly. 'Oscar Boyd, I have a proposition to make to you,' she said. 'If you are as poor a man as you say you are—and I do not choose to doubt your word—I have no desire to be a drag on you for ever. I have come a long way in search of you, and it will be equally far to go back. Listen, then. Give me two thousand pounds—you can easily raise that amount among your fine friends—and I will solemnly promise to put six thousand miles of ocean between us, and never to seek you out or trouble you in any way again.'

For a moment he looked up and gazed steadily into her face. 'Impossible!' he said drily, and with that he resumed his notations.

'Why do you say that? The sum is not a large one. And think! You will get rid of me for ever. What happiness! There will be nothing

then to hinder you from marrying that woman whom I saw in your arms. Oh! I am not in the least jealous, although I love you so dearly, and although—'here she glanced at herself in the chimney-glass—'that woman is not half so good-looking as I am. No one in this house but she knows that I am your wife. You have only to swear to her that I am an impostor, and she will believe you—we women are such easy fools where we love!—and will marry you. *Que dites vous, cher Oscar?*'

'Impossible.'

'*Peste!* I have no patience with you. You will never have such an offer again. *Mais je comprends.* Although your words are so cruel, you love me too well to let me go. As for that woman whom I saw you kissing, I will think no more of her. You did not know I was so near, and I forgive you.' Here she turned to the glass again, gave the strings of her bonnet a little twist, and smoothed her left eyebrow. 'Make haste, then, my darling husband, and introduce your wife to your fine friends, as a gentleman ought to do. I will ring the bell.'

Mr Boyd rose and pushed back his chair. 'Pardon me—you will do nothing of the kind,' he said, more sternly than he had yet spoken. 'It is not my intention to introduce you to any one in this house. It would be useless. We start for London in a couple of hours. I have some final preparations to make, and will leave you for a few minutes. Meanwhile, I must request that you will not quit this room.'

She clapped her gloved hands together and laughed a shrill discordant laugh. 'And do you really think, Oscar Boyd, that I am the kind of woman to submit to all this? You ought to know me better—far better.' Then with one of those sudden changes of mood which were characteristic of her, she went on: 'And yet, perhaps—as I have heard some people say—a wife's first duty is submission. Perhaps her second is, never to leave her husband. *Eh bien!* You shall have my submission, but—I will never leave you. If you go to Chili, I will follow you there, as I have followed you here. I will follow you to the ends of the earth! Do you hear? I will haunt you wherever you go! I will dog your footsteps day and night! Everywhere I will proclaim myself as your wife!' She nodded her head at him meaningly three times, when she had finished her tirade.

Standing with one hand resting on the back of his chair, while the other toyed with his watch-guard, he listened to her attentively, but without any visible emotion. 'You will be good enough not to leave this room till my return,' he said; and without another word, he went out and shut the door behind him.

Her straight black eyebrows came together, and a volcanic gleam shot from her eyes as she gazed after him. 'Why did he not lock me in?' she said to herself with a sneer. She began to pace the room as a man might have paced it, with her hands behind her back and her fingers tightly interlocked. 'Will nothing move him? Is it for this I have crossed the ocean? Is it for this I have tracked him? His fortune gone! I never dreamt of that—and they told me he was so rich. What an unlucky wretch I am! I should like to stab him—or myself—or some one. If I could

but set fire to the house at midnight, and'—She was interrupted by the opening of the door and the entrance of Sir Frederick Pinkerton. At the sight of a man who was also a gentleman, her face changed in a moment.

(To be concluded next month.)

LONDON BONDED WAREHOUSES.

THE thought occurred to the writer the other day, when seated at his desk, as an examining officer of Customs, in one of the extensive bonded vaults which are within sight of that famous historic pile the Tower, that a brief description of these warehouses—which possess in some respects features that are unique—might prove interesting to general readers. We do not know if any previous attempt has been made in this direction; if so, it has not come within the scope of the writer's observation during an experience in London as a Civil servant of twenty years.

In this brief sketch there are certain reflections that occur which may perhaps be worthy of some consideration. One of these is, that even in the most busy parts of the City there are extremely few persons—though they may have daily passed along the leading thoroughfares for years—who know anything about the interiors of the vast warehouses and immense repositories for merchandise of all sorts, which abound in the business area of London, east of Temple Bar, extending far down both banks of the Thames. We do not refer especially to the great docks, such as the London, St Katharine, East and West India, Royal Albert, Surrey Commercial, and other similar emporiums of commerce, which form so remarkable a feature of the Thames, and are only rivalled by the huge docks on the Mersey. Those establishments, it must be allowed, attract a large number of visitors, although these are chiefly strangers from the country; the strictly commercial classes of the City, unless intimately connected with the shipping interest, but rarely extending their explorations thitherward. Some favoured citizens and 'country cousins,' by the privilege of what is called technically a 'tasting order,' may, however, traverse miles of cellars, filled with the choicest vintages, and in the wine-vaults may behold the most curious fungoid forms, white as snow, pendent from the vaulted roofs. They may survey, as at the London Docks, thirty thousand casks of brandy in a single vault; or traverse the famous 'Spice' warehouse, redolent with the aromatic odours of the East; or if they have a penchant for Jamaica rum, by extending their visit to the West India Dock, they can see the largest collection of rum-casks to be found in any bonded warehouse on the habitable globe. But it is not to these colossal establishments that we wish now to refer, interesting and important as they may be, but rather to the less pretentious and smaller warehouses, forming a group styled officially 'Uptown Warehouses.'

No one passing along Crutched Friars—the very name suggests that strange blending of the past with modern commercial activity, which is observable in London as in other large centres of population—would from external signs surmise for a moment, that under his feet and around him there were acres of vaults containing tens

of thousands of casks of port, sherry, and various descriptions of spirit. Yet such is the fact; and as a matter of detail, it may be stated that the stock of port wine in one of these vaults comprises the finest brands imported into the metropolis. The firm of B—— is well known throughout the commercial world of London, and is believed to be upwards of a century old. The original founder, who sprang from a very humble stock, died worth, it is said, two million pounds sterling, amassed by the skilful and honourable conduct of a bonding business, which had grown from very modest conditions indeed, to rival the huge proportions of the docks themselves. In fact, the tendency of the last few years has been decidedly to withdraw the bonding trade from these formerly gigantic establishments, and to concentrate it in the Uptown Warehouses. The result of this has been to lower the shares of the Dock Companies to the minimum level compatible with commercial solvency; while, owing to the keen rivalry with the smaller and more progressive bonding warehouses elsewhere, the charges have been reduced to a point that would have surprised merchants of past days. One great reason for the modern change which we have noted, is unquestionably the superior accessibility of the Uptown Warehouses to the City proper, and their comparative nearness to the various railway termini. Time and distance, in these days of excessive speed, are prime factors, and must in the end assert themselves. Besides, it is evident to all thinking men that we have reached a crisis in the transport of merchandise, and that the railway is becoming daily more omnipotent.

Though we have hitherto referred only to the casks of vinous liquors, technically known as 'wet goods,' stored in the vaults, it must not be inferred that they constitute the sole description of merchandise contained within the walls of these warehouses. Tea, inclosed in chests, piled tier upon tier, fills a large space, and yields a very considerable amount of revenue to the Crown. Perhaps of all goods now comprised in the tariff as 'dutiable,' the collection of the tea duty, which is at present assessed at sixpence per pound, is the simplest and least expensive. In B——'s premises, where the stock is comparatively small, the annual yield of duty to the revenue is nearly two hundred thousand pounds. It is, however, far otherwise with the duty paid on 'wet goods,' wine, perhaps, excepted, the rates of which, governed by strength, are, for wines containing less than twenty-six degrees of alcoholic strength—being mainly of French production—at one shilling per gallon; and for those of a greater degree of strength, but below the limit of forty-two degrees—which is the usual standard of Portuguese and Spanish wines—at two shillings and sixpence per gallon. This difference in the assessment of duty on the basis of strength between the vintages of France and Portugal, has been for some years a sore point with the latter government. Various protests have been made against its retention, which it must be admitted seems to press somewhat hardly upon the trade of the Iberian peninsula with this country; but as yet, while we write, no satisfactory solution has been arrived at of what is a real *questio vexata*. The collection of the spirit duties involves very considerable nicety and

calculation—whisky perhaps excepted, which is officially known as British Plain Spirits, and the duty on which is assessed at ten shillings per gallon of proof strength. In the case of all other descriptions of spirits, however, the method is rendered more intricate, owing to a recent regulation which requires the determination of the degree of what is styled 'obscuration' by distillation, the duty being charged at a uniform rate of ten shillings and fourpence per proof gallon.

The laboratory tests are in the Customs establishment of a highly scientific character, demanding on the part of the operators considerable skill and knowledge of chemistry. The instruments used in the various processes—of which Sikes's hydrometer and Mr Keen's are best known—are of very ingenious construction, and require nice handling and steadiness of eye.

The gauging of casks, which is performed by a large staff of, generally speaking, skilful and highly meritorious officers, is quite a science in itself, and requires years of constant practice to make the operator thoroughly proficient. But in this, as in other arts, there are of course various degrees of excellence. In the Customs service—and the same thing will doubtless apply to the Excise—there are gaugers who stand head and shoulders above their fellows, and who appear to have the power by merely glancing at a cask, as if by intuition, to tell its 'content,' as its holding capacity is officially styled. Although it has been the usage in certain quarters to speak in contemptuous terms of the functions of this deserving class of public servants, and to apply to them the opprobrious epithet of 'dip-sticks,' we have no sympathy with such detraction, which is quite unmerited.

It would be impossible within the brief limits of this paper to describe minutely the various operations in bond which are daily going on at these stations. Such comprise Vatting, Blending, Mixing, Racking, Reducing, Fortifying, Bottling, Filtering, &c., and would in themselves suffice for a separate article.

Having given a very meagre outline of the multifarious duties and processes carried on at the various bonding vaults in London and elsewhere, we may perhaps fitly conclude with a brief description of certain antiquarian features of special interest, to be met with in Messrs B——'s premises. As previously remarked, the monastic character of one of the leading approaches is conveyed in the title of Crutched Friars. But it is evident from other and various remains that its site includes a most important portion of ancient *Londinum*. A considerable extent of the old Roman wall, upwards of a hundred feet, in an excellent state of preservation, 'the squared stones and bonding tiles' being marvellously well defined, forms the boundary of what is known as the 'South' Vault. On a higher level, styled the Vat Floor, in the mediæval portion of the City wall, is to be seen a fine specimen of the Roman casement, which is said to be the only one now remaining in the City. According to the best antiquarian authorities, these remains form a part of the circumvallation of London begun in the reign of Constantine and completed by Theodosius. As is only natural, these relics are highly prized by the Antiquarian Society, which has in no

ordinary terms expressed its appreciation of the zealous care bestowed by the proprietors in preserving these unique and priceless treasures of the past.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

PROFESSOR JANSSEN, the well-known astronomer of Meudon Observatory, who has done more than any man living, perhaps, towards wedding the photographic camera with the telescope, has lately published some account of a marvellous picture which he obtained of 'the old moon in the new moon's arms.' At the time that the picture was taken, the moon was only three days old, and an uncovering of the lens for one minute only was sufficient to secure the image. This image is feeble, but is full of detail, plainly showing the general configuration of the lunar surface. Professor Janssen believes that this application of photography points to a means of obtaining more precise measurements of the light, and of studying the phenomena which are produced by the double reflection of the solar light between our earth and its satellite. To the uninitiated, in these days of marvellous instantaneous pictures, an exposure of one minute may seem rather a long period. But let us consider for a moment what a very small proportion of the sun's glory is reflected to us from the moon, even on the finest nights. Professor Sir W. Thomson gives some interesting information on this point. Comparing the full moon to a standard candle, he tells us that the light it affords is equal to that given by such a candle at a distance of seven feet and a half. As in the above-mentioned photograph the light dealt with came from a moon not full, but only three days old, it will be seen that Professor Janssen had a very small amount of illumination for his picture, and the only wonder is that he was able to obtain any result at all.

It will be remembered that in the autumn of 1882, a series of observations were commenced in the polar regions, which had been organised by an International Polar Committee. Fourteen expeditions from various countries took up positions in that inhospitable area, with the intention of carrying out observations for twelve months, from which it was hoped that valuable knowledge would be gained. This programme has been successfully carried out, ten of the expeditions having returned home, many of them laden with rich stores of observations. Three remain to continue their work for another year. As to the return of the remaining band of observers—belonging to the United States—there is as yet no definite information.

On Ailsa Craig, Firth of Clyde, there is being erected, by order of the Commissioners of Northern Lights, a mineral-oil gas-work, to supply gas for the lighthouse in course of construction there, as well as to feed the gas-engines which will be used to drive the fog-signalling apparatus. The works are being erected by the patentee of this gas-system, Mr James Keith, and will cost three thousand pounds. They will be capable of manufacturing two thousand cubic feet of oil-gas per hour, of fifty-candle illuminating standard. It has long been the opinion of many that the

electric light is not the best illuminant for light-house purposes, and this installation at Ailsa Craig, following one on the same principle at the Isle of Man not long ago, would seem to indicate that the authorities think so too.

North-east of Afghanistan there lies a piece of country called Kafiristan, which, until April last, had never been traversed by the foot of a European. In that month, however, Mr W. W. McNair, of the Indian medical service, crossed the British frontier, and travelled through the little-known region for two months. An interesting account of his wanderings formed the subject of a paper read by him at a recent meeting of the Royal Geographical Society. The country is inhabited by three main tribes—Ramgals, Vaigals, and Bashgals, answering to the three chief valleys, and each having a distinctive dialect. The men are warlike and brave, but, like many other semi-barbarous peoples, leave the heavy work of agriculture to the women. The Mohammedans hem them in on all sides; but as the tribes are at peace among themselves, they are able to hold their own. Slavery exists to some extent. The people acknowledge one supreme being, Imbra, and worship at temples presided over by priests; but to neither priests nor idols is excessive reverence paid. Bows and arrows form their chief arms; and although a few matchlocks have found their way into the country from Cabul, no attempt has been made to imitate them. Wealth is reckoned by heads of cattle; the staple food is wheat; and the favourite drink pure grape-juice, not rendered intoxicating by fermentation or distillation.

Although there is every reason to believe that cruelty to animals is far less common than it was, still there are many men who are not so merciful to their beasts as they might be. Many of these offend from ignorance, and will leave poor creatures exposed to inclement weather under the belief that they will not suffer. Professor Shelton, of the Kansas State Agricultural College, has lately shown, by careful experiment, that it pays to be merciful in the matter of providing shelter for pigs; and we have no doubt that if his researches had been extended to other animals, a similar result would have been obtained. For this experiment, ten pigs, as nearly as possible alike with regard to breed, age, &c., were chosen, five being kept in a barn, and five in the open, but provided with straw to lie upon. These two families were fed twice a day with carefully weighed messes of Indian corn. In the sequel, it was found that each bushel of corn produced in the barn-fed pigs ten and three-tenths pounds of pork, whilst each bushel given to the outsiders formed only nine and seven-tenths. This result of course clearly shows that a large proportion of the food given went to keep the outdoor pigs warm, instead of adding to their flesh. If the bucolic mind will only grasp this fact, we feel sure that more attention will be given to the question of shelter for animals.

Professor Cohn, writing from Breslau to *Nature*, calls attention to the circumstance that just two hundred years ago there was made in the Netherlands a scientific discovery of the greatest importance. In the year 1683, Leeuwenhoek gave notice to our Royal Society that by the aid of his microscope he had detected in the white sub-

stance adhering to his teeth 'very little animals moving in a very lively fashion.' 'These,' says Professor Cohn, '*were the first bacteria which the human eye ever saw.*' The descriptions and drawings given by this first observer are so correct, that even in these days, when the Germ theory of disease has brought forward so many workers in the same field, armed with much improved appliances, the organisms drawn by the hand of Leeuwenhoek can be easily recognised and compared with their fellows of to-day. These drawings have indeed never been surpassed till within the last ten years, a fact which speaks volumes for their accuracy and value.

The buildings occupied by the International Fisheries Exhibition at South Kensington are, in 1884, to be devoted to a no less important object, albeit it is not likely to be so popular with the masses. This Exhibition will deal with matters relating to Health and Education. It will include the food-resources of the world; the best means of cooking that food; the costumes of the world, and their bearing upon health; the sanitary construction of dwellings; and many other things that every one ought to know about, but which very few study. With the Prince of Wales as President, assisted by a Council including the names of Sir Cunliffe Owen and Mr Birkbeck, the success of the scheme ought to be assured.

In Cannon Street, London, an experimental section of roadway of a novel kind has lately been laid down. It is the invention of Mr H. F. Williams, an engineer of San Francisco, where the system has been most successfully employed for the past seven years. Indeed, the roads so prepared are said to be as good as when first laid down, allowing for a reasonable amount of wear and tear. The process is as follows. First of all is provided a good dry concrete foundation; upon this are laid blocks of wood, grain-end uppermost, measuring eight inches by four, with a thickness of an inch and a half. Each block, before being placed in position, is dipped half-way into a boiling mixture of asphalt and Trinidad bitumen; this glues the blocks to the foundation and to one another, at the same time leaving a narrow space all round the upper half of each piece of wood. This space is afterwards filled in with boiling asphalt. Above all is spread a half-inch coating of asphalt mixed with coarse grit, the object of which is to prevent that dangerous slipperiness that is common to asphalt roadways in moist states of the atmosphere.

At Brooklyn, the sanitary authorities seem to have a very sensible method of dealing with milk-dealers in the matter of adulteration. They invited the dealers to meet in the Common Council Chamber, when it was explained to them by an expert how they could determine by various tests whether the milk purchased from the farms is of the required standard. At the conclusion of this conference, it was hinted that the licenses of such dealers as were thenceforward detected in selling adulterated milk would be peremptorily revoked.

At the end of December last, the first of four large silos on Lord Tollemache's estate in Cheshire was opened in the presence of a large number of farmers and scientific agriculturists. It had been filled with dry grass, chopped into inch-lengths by a chaff-cutter, and pressed down with a weight

equal to fifty-six pounds on the square foot. The appearance of the ensilage was that of dark-brown moss, having a pleasant aroma; but, as in other experiments of the kind, the top layer was mouldy and spoiled. Lord Tollemache stated that he found that animals did not seem to care for the fodder when first offered them, but that they afterwards ate it with evident relish. Several samples of ensilage were exhibited at the late Cattle-show in London, and it is noteworthy that almost without exception the pampered show-animals, when a handful was offered them by way of experiment, took the food greedily. On Mr C. Mackenzie's farm of Portmore, in Peeblesshire, a silo was opened in December, the contents of which—pressed down while in a moist condition—were found to be excellently suited for feeding purposes.

It is worthy of notice that the past year brought with it the fiftieth anniversary of the lucifer-match, which was first made in this kingdom by John Walker of Stockton-on-Tees in 1833. The same year, a factory was started at Vienna; and very soon works of a similar character sprang up all over the world. In 1847, a most important improvement was made in substituting the red amorphous phosphorus for the more common variety. This modification put an end to that terrible disease, phosphorus necrosis, which attacked the unfortunate matchmakers. The strong agitation which this disease gave rise to against the employment of phosphorus, naturally directed the attention of experimenters to other means of striking a light; and although phosphorus in its harmless amorphous form still holds its own, it is probable that its presence in lucifer-matches will some day be dispensed with. We need hardly remind our readers that the universal adoption of the electric light would greatly curtail the use of matches, for that form of illumination does not require an initial spark to set it aglow.

Some artillery officers in Switzerland have been putting their snow-clad mountain flanks to a curious experimental use, for they have been employing one of them as a gigantic target for their missiles. A space on this snow-covered ground measuring two hundred and thirty feet by ninety-eight feet—which would represent the area occupied by a battalion of infantry in double column—was carefully marked out, its centre being occupied by flags. At a distance of about a mile, the artillery opened fire upon this mapped-out space until they had expended three hundred shots. The ground was then examined; and the pits in the snow when counted showed that seventy-eight per cent. of the shots had entered the inclosure. Had a veritable battalion occupied the ground, there would have been few, if any survivors.

In another experiment, snow was employed as a means of defence against artillery. A wall sixteen and a half feet long, and five feet high, was built of snow having various thicknesses, but backed by half-inch wooden planking. This wall was divided into three sections, having a thickness respectively of four and a half feet, three feet, and twenty inches. Against the thickest section, twelve shots were fired from various distances; but in no case was penetration effected. In the three-foot section, shots pierced the snow as far

as the woodwork, where they were stopped. In the twenty-inch section, all the shots fired went completely through the wall. It would seem from these experiments that snow, when available, can be made a valuable means of defence. But, unfortunately, in the published account of the experiments, the calibre of the guns employed is not given; we should, however, assume them to be field-artillery of a very light type.

A new use for the ubiquitous dynamo-electric machine is reported from Saxony, and one which seems to fulfil a most useful purpose—namely, the ventilation of mines. At the Carola pits, Messrs Siemens and Halske, the German electricians, have inaugurated this new system. At the pit bank, a dynamo is stationed, which is coupled up by shafting with the engine. By means of copper conductors, this machine is connected with another dynamo, two thousand five hundred feet away in the depths of the mine. This latter is connected with a powerful centrifugal fan. The cost of working these combined machines is six shillings and threepence per day, which means threepence for every million cubic feet of air delivered.

A new employment for the electric light has been found in Bavaria, where a Committee has reported upon its use as a head-light for locomotive engines. The colour and form of signals can be distinguished by the engine-driver on a cloudy night at a distance of eight hundred feet. The light burns steadily, and is not affected by the motion of the engine; but a special form of arc-lamp is employed, the invention of H. Sedlacek of Vienna. The lamp is so constructed that it moves automatically when the engine traverses a curve, so as to light the track far in advance. The dynamo is placed just behind the funnel, and is easily connected with the moving parts of the machinery by suitable gearing.

The new patent law which came into operation on the first of January will without doubt give a great impetus to invention in this country, for many a man too poor to think of employing a patent agent, and paying down nearly ten pounds for a few months' protection, as he had to do under the old conditions, can easily afford the one pound which is now the sum fixed for the initial fee. Moreover, a would-be patentee can obtain all necessary forms at the nearest post-office, and can send in his specification through the same medium, without the intervention of the 'middle-man.' Of course the law cannot be perfect enough to please every one, and a few months' practice will probably discover many points in which it can be improved. One curious provision has put certain manufacturers in a quandary, for it rules that no article must bear the word 'patent' unless it is really the subject of a patent specification.

A powerful antiseptic and deodoriser can be made by mixing together carbolic acid and chloride of lime, which, when combined, contains sufficiently active properties to correct fermentation. A weak solution is used as a dressing in some gangrenous affections, as it does not cause irritation. The smell, if objected to, can be disguised by oil of lavender.

Fruit may be preserved in a fresh condition for many months by placing it in very fine sand sufficiently thick to cover it, after it has been

well washed and dried and then moistened with brandy. A wooden box is the best receptacle to use, and it should be kept well covered and in a warm place.

According to some French gardeners, vines and other fruit-trees infested with 'mealy-bug' should have their bark brushed over with oil in November when the leaves are all off, and again in the spring when vegetation commences. This mode of treatment is usually very successful when it is applied to young and vigorous trees.

At a recent meeting of the Edinburgh Field Naturalists' Club, a paper was communicated by Mr John Turnbull, Galashiels, locally known as a clever microscopist, in which he explained a new and simple method of obtaining beautiful impressions of the leaves of plants on paper. The materials necessary to take these impressions cost almost nothing. A piece of carbonised paper plays the principal part in the process; but it is of importance to have the carbonised paper fresh, and it should be kept in a damp place, for when the paper dries, the pictures that may be printed from it are not so effective. The leaf or plant to be copied is first of all carefully spread out over the carbonised paper on a table, or, better still, a blotting-pad. Next take a piece of thin tough paper and lay it on the leaf. Then, with the tips of the fingers, rub over the thin paper so as to get the plant thoroughly inked. This done, place the leaf on the paper on which the impression is to be taken. A smooth printing-paper gives the clearest copy. The thin paper is now laid on the plant as before, and the rubbing continued. Of course, care must be taken to keep the plant in position, for if it moves, the impression will be faulty. However, the matter is so very simple that anybody should succeed. Impressions taken in this way have all the delicacy of steel engravings and the faithfulness of photographs. His discovery is likely to come into favour for decorative purposes. The headings of letters on the margins of books might be very tastefully adorned with truly artistic representations of plants. The wood-engraver also will find it will serve his purpose as well as, if not better than, photography. Specimens that have been copied by Mr Turnbull's system, when examined with the microscope, are found to be perfect, even to the delicate hairs that are scarcely visible on the plant to the naked eye.

BOOK GOSSIP.

HISTORY is perhaps one of the most popular of modern studies. It is more definite in its results than Philosophy, and it widens the intellectual horizon more than does the pursuit of particular branches of Science, while it has less tendency than either of these to congeal into dogma. The methods of historians, also, have undergone a signal change within the last fifty years. The historical writers of last century, such as Robertson and Hume, were content to collate the productions of previous authors, to give a new reading here and a fresh deduction there, looking more to literary form than to the production of new facts. Such writers troubled themselves little about the People, but were intensely interested in the movements of

kings, and in the sinuosities of statecraft generally. Anything else was beneath 'the dignity of history.' But this 'dignity of history' has long since been pushed from its perch, and nobody now regards it. Carlyle, Freeman, Froude, Macaulay, Green, and Gardiner, have each and all followed the movements of events as they affected the people, and not alone as they affected kings and statesmen. The result has been that history is fuller of teaching than before, is infused with a truer and deeper interest, appeals in stronger terms to our sense of justice, and lays a firmer hold upon our sympathy. It has, in short, become more human.

Mr J. R. Seeley, Professor of Modern History in the University of Cambridge, has just published a series of lectures under the title of *The Expansion of England* (London: Macmillan & Co.), which shows in a striking manner the progress which has been made in our methods of studying history and estimating its events. It has long, he says, been a favourite maxim of his, that history, while it should be scientific in its method, should pursue a practical object. 'That is, it should not merely gratify the reader's curiosity about the past, but modify his view of the present and his forecast of the future.' The first lecture is devoted to an able exposition of this theorem, into which, however, we cannot here follow the author. He then proceeds to a study of England in the eighteenth century, discusses its old colonial system, points out in detail the effect of the New World on the Old, reviews the history of our conquest of India, and the mutual influence of India and England, and ends by an estimate of the internal and external dangers which beset England as the mother of her colonies and the mistress of her numerous conquests. The lecturer now and again drives his theory to a false issue, and in general gives too great weight to logical sequence in historic transactions. History is not dominated by logic, but by events; and although we may see in these events, from our distant and external standpoint, a distinct chain of development and progress, the actors saw no more of the future of them than we do to-day of the events presently transpiring. Apart, however, from this tendency on the part of Professor Seeley, the lectures are full of wise maxims and suggestive thoughts, and cannot fail to interest and instruct the historical student.

The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge has added to its series called 'The People's Library' a most instructive little volume entitled *A Chapter of Science; or, What is the Law of Nature?* It consists of six lectures which were delivered to working-men by Mr J. Stuart, Professor of Mechanics, Cambridge. The object of the lecturer was to present an example of inductive reasoning, and to familiarise his hearers to some extent with the principles of scientific inquiry; and he has succeeded in his object in a remarkable degree. We do not know any book of the same extent which so fully places before the unscientific reader, or before the reader who has gathered many facts of science without apprehending their bearing upon each other, the principles which should guide him in the endeavour to estimate and arrange these facts

correctly. He reminds his hearers that what science itself has to teach us consists not so much in facts, as in those lessons and deductions which can be drawn from facts, and which can be justly apprehended only by a knowledge of such facts. 'Those,' he aptly says, 'whose knowledge of science has furnished them with only an encyclopædia of facts, are like men who try to warm themselves before coals which have not yet been lighted. Those who are furnished only with the deductions of science are like men who may have a lighted match, but have not the material to construct a fire. That match soon burns away uselessly.' We cannot conceive of any one reading this book, even with only an average degree of attention and only a trifling modicum of scientific knowledge, and not gleaning from it a clearer apprehension of the facts of science and the inductions to be made from these facts.

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A beautiful volume comes to us from the pen of an occasional contributor to this *Journal*, Dr Gordon Stables. It is entitled *Aileen Aroon* (London: S. W. Partridge & Co.), and consists of tales of faithful friends and favourites among the lower animals. The chief story of the book, and that which gives it its title, is concerning a noble Newfoundland dog called 'Aileen Aroon'; but interwoven with it are numerous stories of all kinds of domestic pets—dogs, monkeys, sheep, squirrels, birds of various kinds, and even that much-abused creature the donkey. Dr Stables, as our readers cannot fail to have observed, possesses a very happy style of narration; and his never-failing sympathy with animal-life gives to his several pictures a depth and truth of colouring such as one but rarely meets with in this department of anecdotal literature. A better present could not be put into the hands of a boy or girl who loves animals, than this handsome volume about *Aileen Aroon* and her many friends.

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London Ories is the title of one of those unique volumes, with beautiful and characteristic illustrations, which from time to time emanate from the publishing-house of Messrs Field and Tuer, London. The text of this volume is written by Mr Andrew W. Tuer, and gives an amusing account of the cries, many and various, which have been heard, or may still be heard, in the streets of London.—Another volume by the same publishers is *Chap-book Chaplets*, containing a number of ballads printed in a comically antique fashion, and illustrated by numerous grotesque imitations of old ballad-woodcuts. These are cleverly drawn by Mr Joseph Crawhall, and are all coloured by hand.—A third volume comes from the same source. It is a large folio, entitled *Bygone Beauties*, being a republication of ten portraits of ladies of rank and fashion, from paintings by John Hoppner, R.A., and engraved by Charles Wilkin.

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Whitaker's Almanac for 1884 exhibits all its former features of excellence as an annual, and any changes which have been made are in the direction of further improvement. Besides the usual information expected in almanacs, *Whitaker's* gives very full astronomical notes, from month

to month, as to the position of the planets in the heavens, and other details which must be of interest to many. Its Supplement of scientific and other general information contains much that is curious and worth knowing.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

AMBULANCE SOCIETIES.

We have this month, in the article 'An Order of Mercy' (p. 15), described the operations of the St John Ambulance Association, London, and are pleased to be able to notice that a similar organisation is being set on foot in the Scottish metropolis. The subject was recently brought before the public by Professor Chiene, of the Edinburgh University, in a lecture delivered under the auspices of the Edinburgh Health Society. The lecturer spoke of the importance of speedy aid to those who are hurt, and to those who are taken suddenly ill in our streets. At present, in such cases, he said, such persons came under the care of kindly bystanders or the police, none of whom have received any instruction whatever in what is now commonly known as 'first aid to the sick or wounded.' The person was placed either in a cab or on a police-stretcher, and the lecturer could imagine nothing worse adapted for the conveyance of a patient with a fractured limb than a cab. In the case of the police-stretcher, the only advantage it had was the recumbent posture of the patient; in every other particular it was a most inefficient means of conveyance. He asked if the time had not come when they should try and find some remedy. In London, the St John Ambulance Association had been in existence for seven years; in Glasgow, the St Andrew's Ambulance Association was now in full working order; and surely Edinburgh, with all its charitable organisations, with its important hospitals, with the largest medical school in Great Britain, should not be behind in this important matter. During the last three years an average of seven hundred and twenty cases of accident each year had been treated as in-patients in the Royal Infirmary; many other cases had been taken there, their wounds and injuries dressed, and afterwards sent to their own homes. Many cases of accident were conveyed directly to their own homes; many cases of sudden illness were conveyed either to the hospital or their own homes, and he did not think he was over-estimating it when he said that fifteen hundred cases occurred every year in Edinburgh which would benefit from a speedy and comfortable means of conveyance from the place of accident to the place of treatment. In the formation and working of such a society, he would give all the help he could. Mr Cunningham, the secretary of the Glasgow Association, had the cause at heart; and he was sure Mr Miller, one of the surgeons in the Edinburgh Infirmary, and Dr P. A. Young, both of whom had already given ambulance lectures to Volunteers, would give their hearty help. Many of the junior practitioners and senior students would, he was sure, assist as lecturers; and they would soon have in Edinburgh a ready band of certificated assistants, who would give efficient first aid to any one who was injured, and would assist the police in removing them to the hospital or their own homes.

We are glad to observe that as one result of Professor Chiene's appeal, a Committee of Employers in Edinburgh and Leith is being formed for the purpose of having employees instructed in the manner proposed, so that many of the latter may be able to give practical assistance in the event of accidents happening where they are employed.

THE LAST OF THE OLD WESTMINSTER HOUSES.

All who take any interest in the topographical antiquities of the ancient city of Westminster will learn—not perhaps without some feeling akin to regret—that the last of the old original houses of that old medieval city was taken down during the past summer to make room for more convenient and spacious premises. The house has been thought to be over five hundred years old, having been erected in or about the reign of Edward III. It belonged to the Messrs Dent, well-known provision-dealers, by whose predecessors the business was founded in the year 1750. The shop floor was three steps *below* the level of the pavement outside, and the ceiling of the shop was so low that a small man could touch it easily with his hand. The building contained several large and commodious rooms up-stairs, the first floor projecting, as usual in such houses, beyond the wall about a foot. The beams used throughout were heavy, massive, and very hard old English oak; and the roof was covered with old-fashioned red tiles. The house stood at the western corner of Tothill Street, where that street joins the Broadway. A few years ago, several such houses were to be seen on the north side of Tothill Street, but as nearly the whole of that side was taken by the new Aquarium, the quaint old houses were of course removed. Now that the old one above referred to is down, they are all gone, and nothing is left of old Westminster city but its grand and matchless Abbey; and long may its majestic beauty continue to adorn a spot celebrated for so many deeply historical memories.

THE RECENT MARVELLOUS SUNSETS.

The marvellous sunsets which have lately been common all over the world have led to a mass of correspondence and conjectures upon the part of scientific men. Perhaps the fullest and most interesting contribution to the literature of the subject is the long article contributed to the *Times* by Mr Norman Lockyer, who, with many others, is disposed to attribute the phenomena to the presence in the upper regions of the atmosphere of a vast quantity of volcanic dust, the outcome of the terrible eruption—one of the most terrible ever recorded—which took place at Krakatoa in August last. In corroboration of this hypothesis, another correspondent calls attention to the circumstance that similar phenomena were observed in 1783, and are recorded in White's *Selborne* as follows: 'The sun at noon looked as blank as a clouded moon, and shed a rose-coloured ferruginous light on the ground and floors of rooms, but was particularly lurid and blood-coloured at rising and setting. The country-people began to look with superstitious awe at the red lowering aspect of the sun; and indeed there was reason for the most enlightened person to be apprehensive; for

all the while Calabria and part of the isle of Sicily were torn and convulsed with earthquakes, and about that juncture a volcano sprang out of the sea on the coast of Norway.'

NIGHT.

O GENTLE Night! O thought-inspiring Night!
Humbly I bow before thy sovereign power;
Sadly I own thy all-unequaled might
To calm weak mortal in his darkest hour:
Spreading thy robe o'er all the mass of care,
Thou bidd'st the sorrowful no more despair.

When high in heaven thou bidd'st thy torches shine,
Casting on earth a holy, peaceful light,
My heart adores thee in thy calm divine,
Is soothed by thee, O hope-inspiring Night!
All anxious thoughts, all evil bodings fly;
My soul doth rest, since thou, O Night! art nigh.

When thou hast cast o'er all the sleeping land
Thy darkened robe, the symbol of thy state,
Alone beneath heaven's mightiness I stand,
Musing on life, eternity, and fate;
Mayhap with concentrated thought I try
To pierce the cloud of heaven's great mystery.

'Tis then sweet music in the air I hear,
Like rippling waters falling soft and low;
With soul enraptured do I list, yet fear—
'Tis not such music as we mortals know;
It wafts the soul from earthly things away,
Leaving behind the senseless frame of clay.

Friends, kindly faces crowd around me there,
Friends loved the better since they passed away,
Leaving a legacy of wild despair—
And now I see them as in full orb'd day,
The long-lamented once again desery,
Back in each smile, gaze in each speaking eye.

O blest reunion, Night's almighty gift.
Lent for a time unto the thoughtful mind;
When memory can o'er the clouds uplift
The startled soul away from all mankind,
Throw wide eternity's majestic gate,
And grant a view of the immortal state.

And thou, O Night! who can'st these spirits raise,
Giv'st immortality to mortal eyes,
To thee I tune mine unadorned praise,
And chant thy glories to the list'ning skies:
Waft, O ye winds! the floating notes along;
Ye woods and mountains, echo back the song.

ROBERT A. NEILSON.

The Conductor of CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL begs to direct the attention of CONTRIBUTORS to the following notice:

1st. All communications should be addressed to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3d. MANUSCRIPTS should bear the author's full Christian name, Surname, and Address, legibly written; and should be written on white (not blue) paper, and on one side of the leaf only.

4th. Offerings of Verse should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

If the above rules are complied with, the Editor will do his best to insure the safe return of ineligible papers.

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